

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 01830 290751Z
ACTION SCS-03

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R 281432Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3269
INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 1830

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR SO ET
SUBJ: MISSIONARY PROBLEMS

REF: ADDIS ABABA 1803

1. BESIDES EVACUATION OF MISSIONARIES AND OTHER WESTERNERS FROM GODE REPORTED REFTTEL, PRESENT UNSETTLED SITUATION IN COUNTRYSIDE HAS HAD FURTHER IMPACT ON MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA. SUDAN INTERIOR MISSION (SIM) AIR EVACUATED FIVE WESTERN MISSIONARIES AND TWO DEPENDENTS FROM SOUTHEASTERN OGADEN TOWN OF KELAFO, MARCH 25. TOWN DESTROYED BY IRREGULAR "SOMALI" FORCE AND MISSIONARIES HAVE TOLD SIM DIRECTOR THAT SOMALIS WERE NOT FROM IMMEDIATE AREA. MISSIONARY COMPOUND LOOTED AND COMPLETELY DESTROYED BY ATTACKERS. SIM HAS NO PLANS TO RETURN TO KELAFO AT THIS TIME.

2. SIM DIRECTOR ALSO HAS INFORMED EMBASSY OF PPLAN TO REMOVE WESTERN MISSIONARY STAFF FROM SODU APPROXIMATELY 150 KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF SHASHEMENE AND TURN OVER TWO MILLION US DOLLAR HOSPITAL COMPLETED LAST YEAR TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES. DECISION MADE AFTER LOCAL PEASANT ASSOCIATION DENOUNCED AMERICAN MISSIONARY DOCTOR IN LATE FEBRUARY FOR USING OUTDATED DRUGS. MINISTRY OF
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HEALTH OFFICIALS CAME TO HOSPITAL, PUBLICLY BURNED DRUGS AND DOCTOR SUBJECTED TO SIX-HOUR PUBLIC INCRIMINATION SESSION. SIM DIRECTOR NOTED THAT USE OF SUCH DRUGS ROUTINE PRACTICE SINCE IT BOTH INEXPENSIVE AND SAFE WHEN DONE BY EXPERIENCED PHYSICIAN.

3. IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS, SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS HAVE

REPORTED THAT THEIR HOSPITAL IN MEKELE HAD BEEN TAKEN
OVER BY MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND ON AMERICAN MENNONITE
MISSIONARY IN DEDER (HARARGE) HAS BEEN DETAINED BY
LOCAL KEBELE OFFICIALS.

4. COMMENT: EVACUATIONS REFLECT HIGH LEVEL OF SOMALI-
BACKED INSURGENT ACTIVITY IN SOUTH SINCE NOVEMBER.
CONINUING ATTACKS SUPPORT VIEW THAT REPORTED CASTRO
MEDIATION EFFOR UNSUCCESSFUL. OTHER MISSIONARY PROBLEMS
SYMPTOMATIC OF INCREASED POWER OF KEBELES AND PEASANTS
ASSOCIATIONS AS WELL AS PROBABLE INFLUENCE OF PORVISIONAL
OFFICE OFMASS ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS (POMOA) CADRES.
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